

Editor:

October 13th, 2012 will be New Options Recognition Day for the Women who participated in this endeavor at Shelton State Community College 1985 – 1999. There will be a covered dish lunch at Noon, Saturday, October 13th at Canterbury Episcopal Chapel Student Center. There will be a program with Dr. Cindy Roth, Dean of the College of Social Work, speaking. Certificates will be awarded to all participants attending.

In the almost thirty years since the inception of the program, New Options women have enjoyed significant achievements, both in personal life and in career attainment. I write in praise of these women. It was my privilege and joy to direct the Displaced Homemaker Program. The guiding principle of New Options was to encourage women to achieve economic independence and personal fulfillment. Our curriculum offered academic scholarships, individual guidance through Counseling Sessions, seminars in the preparation for future success, both in career and personal life, and much welcomed life enrichment opportunities. We had numerous field trips (one popular one was to the Native American Festival at Moundville State Park).

An oft repeated statement by women who sought new options with hope and determination was "Now it's time for me." As one participant wrote in a thank-you card "How exciting to be fulfilling a dream. Of all the things you helped me realize this semester with my goals and dreams, the best part is having complete hope. For the last eight years I had no hope. It is wonderful to not be

down and depressed and have great hope that I will achieve all my goals and dreams." Another participant wrote in an essay explaining the square she created to be in our large friendship quilt which centered around a large square picturing a lovely butterfly. Rachael wrote "the butterfly represents the gentle, quiet strength possessed by women. It represents the beauty and fragile condition of human beings. It's also woman. In grief, joy, or change New Options women all draw together to remind ourselves that yes, we will move on and remain together in heart even if we part."

One vibrant aspect of the experience of many participants was the sisterhood which developed among women of differing age and race. This companionship resulted in lasting friendships.

So ladies, come together to celebrate the unique experience we shared in seeking new options for our journeys. Perhaps you will join me in exclaiming "I wouldn't take nothin for my journey now!"

Editor, thank you for affording me a chance to extend this invitation to my New Options sisters.

Paula Sue Burnum Hayes

PS from PS. Let one of our committee members know by 10/10/12
If you plan to attend Call Paula Sue @ 758-0944, Jean Mack, Fred Campus Library, or Jean Eppes, Martin Campus Library.